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**MEMORANDUM**

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**ATTENTION** Senate**DATE** September 18, 2025**FROM** Mary O'Brien,  
Chair of Senate Graduate Studies  
Committee (SGSC)**RE:** Graduate General Regulation 1.3 Admissions

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**For Approval:** At its meeting on April 1, 2025, SGSC reviewed and approved the revision Graduate General Regulations 1.3 Admissions. This gives rise to the following motion, effective **Summer 2026**:

**Motion 1:**

That Senate approve the revisions to Graduate General Regulation 1.3 Admissions, effective Summer 2026



MEMORANDUM

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ATTENTION Mary O'Brien, Chair of Senate DATE 25 March 2025  
Graduate Studies Committee (SGSC)  
FROM Pamela Stern, Graduate Studies  
Associate Dean, Curriculum  
and Policy  
RE: Graduate General Regulation Changes:  
GGR 1.3 Admissions

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A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Pamela", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

**Motion:**

That SGSC approve the amendments to GGR 1.3 concerning graduate admissions.

**Summary and Rationale:**

The proposed changes update GGR 1.3, which concerns graduate admissions. The amendments are primarily editorial to improve grammar and clarity. It is further proposed that section 1.3.8 Admission as a Qualifying Student be deleted, and the subsequent sections be renumbered. The category "qualifying student" is rarely used, and at present is available to domestic students only. Students with this classification are enrolled in undergraduate courses, not graduate courses, and are thus, non-degree or post-baccalaureate Programs wishing to admit applicants to a graduate program can use the Conditional Admission category.

**Recommendations:**

That SGSC approve these modifications to the Graduate General Regulations.

## 1.3 Admissions

### 1.3.1 General

For admission to post baccalaureate programs, refer to the undergraduate section of this Calendar.

A student may seek admission to a graduate certificate, graduate diploma, master's or doctoral program. ~~A student who is not qualified to enter a specific program may seek admission to the university as a qualifying student under the provisions of paragraph 1.3.8.-~~

Applicants meeting the minimum university requirements for admission are not assured admission ~~into any~~ to a graduate program. Most graduate programs have admission requirements in addition to the minimum. Furthermore, programs must restrict admission to students whose interests are compatible with available resources and faculty expertise.

Applicants may be admitted to ~~the~~ Fall, Spring or Summer term, unless a program requires students to start in a specific term. ~~Applicants~~ **Admitted applicants** may request to defer their admission term for up to a maximum of one year. The program has authority to approve or deny the deferral **request**. If the deferral is approved, the offer of admission may be modified.

### 1.3.2 Application for Admission

Application is through the **online application system**. Completed applications and accompanying materials must be submitted to the ~~department~~ **academic unit** before the deadline specified by the ~~department~~ **unit**. Applicants are advised to check with the appropriate ~~department~~ **academic unit** as to the prevailing application procedures and deadlines for the graduate program in which they are interested. Applicants are advised that deadlines for applications for awards and teaching assistantships may be earlier than the deadlines for application to a graduate program.

~~All decisions on g~~Graduate admissions **criteria** are ~~made~~ **approved** by the ~~senate-graduate studies committee, on recommendation from~~ the Faculty of Graduate Studies Assembly **and Senate on recommendation from** and graduate program committees. ~~Decisions on admissions shall be final.~~ Final approval of admission for non-degree students or exchange graduate students is by the dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies. **Decisions on admissions shall be final.**

#### RETENTION OF DOCUMENTS

The documents which students supply to support admission applications will be retained for three terms following the term to which application is made. Then, application forms,

transcripts and other materials related to applications will be destroyed. Irreplaceable documents will be returned to the applicant if requested at the time of application. All other documents become the property of the university.

#### PROTECTION OF PRIVACY

Simon Fraser University gathers and maintains information used for the purposes of admission, enrollment and other fundamental activities related to being a Simon Fraser University community member and to attending a public post-secondary institution in the Province of British Columbia. When submitting an application for admission, all applicants are advised that the information they provide and any other information placed into the student record will be protected and used in compliance with British Columbia's Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (1992).

All British Columbian applicants will be asked to provide their BC personal education numbers (PEN) at the time of application. All others will be assigned a PEN by the British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology. Its uses are restricted to research and program evaluation. No identifiable personal information will be released.

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### 1.3.3 English Language Competence

English is the language of instruction and communication at the university. Accordingly, an applicant whose primary language is not English must demonstrate command of English sufficient to pursue graduate studies in the chosen field.

International applicants will not be required to complete an English-language test if they have completed a degree at an institution where the language of instruction and examination was in English in a country where English is the primary language.

All other international applicants will be required to achieve a minimum score on one of the following:

- International English Language Test System (IELTS Academic, not the general test) 6.5 overall with a minimum of 6.0 in each section
- Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) 90 or better is achieved with a minimum of 20 in each section
- Canadian Academic English Language Assessment (CAEL) overall 70, with a minimum of 60 in each section
- Pearson Test of English – Academic (PTE) 65 overall score, with a minimum of 60 in each section
- Cambridge English Qualifications: C1 Advanced or C2 Proficiency with a minimum score of 180

- ~~Provisionally through the Fall 2026 admission cycle:~~ Duolingo English Test (DET) 125 overall with a minimum of 105 in each section.

All test scores are valid for a period of two years from the date of the test. Some graduate programs have higher English language proficiency requirements as described in their admission requirements.

An applicant requesting a waiver of the English language proficiency test should do so in writing and submit it with their application: in order to maintain a high academic standard, very few waivers are granted. Therefore, it is recommended that those applicants whose primary language is not English submit an English language proficiency test with their application.

### 1.3.4 Admission to a Graduate Certificate Program

The minimum university requirements for admission to a graduate certificate program are as follows:

a) a bachelor's degree from Simon Fraser University, or its equivalent from a recognized institution;

b) a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.5/4.33,

or

a grade point average of at least 2.67/4.33 (B-) based on the last 60 units of undergraduate courses;

c) submitted evidence, usually references from qualified referees, of the applicant's ability to undertake advanced studies in the area of interest.

In exceptional circumstances, an applicant may be admitted with lower formal qualifications than in (a) **or (b)** when there is significant experience relevant to the proposed area of study. ~~Applicants~~ **Such applicants may be** ~~being recommended through these exceptional circumstances would normally be admitted~~ **with conditions (1.3.8)** ~~conditionally to the university.~~

~~Applicants~~ **Students** must satisfy any further requirements set by the graduate program committee.

### 1.3.5 Admission to a Graduate Diploma Program

The minimum university requirements for admission to a graduate diploma program are as follows:

a) a bachelor's degree from Simon Fraser University, or its equivalent from a recognized institution;

b) a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.5/4.33,

or

a grade point average of at least 2.67/4.33 (B-) based on the last 60 units of undergraduate courses;

c) submitted evidence, usually references from qualified referees, of the applicant's ability to undertake advanced work in the area of interest.

In exceptional circumstances, an applicant may be admitted with lower formal qualifications than in (a) **or (b)** when there is significant experience relevant to the proposed area of study. ~~Applicants~~ **Such applicants may be being recommended through these exceptional circumstances would normally be admitted with conditions (1.3.8) conditionally to the university.**

~~Applicants~~ **Students** must satisfy any further requirements set by the graduate program committee.

### 1.3.6 a Admission to a Master's Program

The minimum university requirements for admission to a master's program are as follows:

a) a bachelor's degree from Simon Fraser University or its equivalent from a recognized institution;

b) a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0/4.33 (B),

or

a grade point average of at least 3.33/4.33 (B+) based on the last 60 units of undergraduate courses. Any graduate work is also considered. Individual graduate programs may set a higher admission grade point average;

c) submitted evidence, usually references from qualified referees, of the applicant's ability to undertake advanced study in the area of interest.

In exceptional circumstances, an applicant may be admitted with lower formal qualifications than in (a) or (b) when there is significant experience relevant to the proposed area of scholarship. Applicants being recommended through these exceptional circumstances would normally be admitted conditionally to the university.

Students must satisfy any further requirements set by the graduate program committee.

### 1.3.6 b Transfer to a Master's Program

A student may **apply to** transfer from a certificate or diploma to a master's program if the following requirements are met:

- a) transfer takes place before the sixth term within a certificate or diploma;
- b) CGPA is 3.0 or above or if all courses are graded on Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory basis, all must be complete with Satisfactory;
- c) evidence that the student is capable of undertaking substantial original research;
- d) must have completed a minimum of 12 units of course work in the certificate or 75% of the course work required in the diploma.

### 1.3.6c Admission to a Master's program through the Accelerated Pathway

In certain circumstances, advanced undergraduate students may take graduate courses while in their final year of undergraduate study.

The minimum university requirements for eligibility for an accelerated master's pathway are as follows:

- a) Enrollment in a Simon Fraser University undergraduate bachelor's program and the completion of 90 undergraduate credits with a minimum CGPA of 3.33/4.33; or a grade point average of at least 3.5/4.33 based on the most recent 60 units of undergraduate and graduate courses. Admission to a graduate program is not guaranteed, and academic units may set higher grade point minimums.
- b) Submitted evidence from qualified referees of the student's ability to undertake advanced work in the area of interest.

Students must satisfy any additional requirements set by the admitting academic unit's graduate program committee.

A maximum of 10 graduate course units, used either as electives or upper division required courses at the bachelor's level, can be applied to the requirements for the master's degree.

### 1.3.7a Admission to a Doctoral Program

The minimum university requirements for admission to a doctoral program:

a) a master's degree from Simon Fraser University or its equivalent from a recognized institution,

or

a bachelor's degree, with a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.5/4.33, or a grade point average of at least 3.67/4.33 (A-) based on the last 60 units of undergraduate courses. Any graduate work is also considered. Applicants admitted directly from a bachelor's degree must complete at least 50% of the course work units required for the relevant ~~department's~~ **academic unit's** master's program if no course work is required as part of the doctoral degree;

and

b) submitted evidence that the applicant is capable of undertaking substantial original research. Normally, such capability will be judged from letters of reference from qualified referees, and the completion of a master's thesis, project or other scholarly study.

Applicants must satisfy any further requirements set by the graduate program ~~committee~~.

### 1.3.7 b Transfer to a Doctoral Program

A student may **apply to** transfer from a master's to a doctoral program if the following requirements are met:

a) completion of at least 75% of the course work units required for the relevant ~~department's~~ **academic unit's** master's program, with a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.5. All graduate work completed at SFU or its equivalent from a recognized institution,

b) evidence that the student is capable of undertaking substantial original research. Normally, such capability will be judged from letters of reference from qualified referees or other evidence of scholarly study;

c) the request for transfer is submitted after the second term and before the seventh term at SFU.

As per **GGR 1.12.1**, initial enrollment in the doctoral program will be considered as the initial enrollment as a master's student.

### ~~1.3.8 Admission as a Qualifying Student~~

~~Qualifying admission may be offered to applicants who are deemed not yet ready to begin their graduate work. The applicant normally will have completed a bachelor's degree but may have a cumulative grade point average well below the university minimum admission requirements, or may have substantial deficiencies in their academic preparation for direct~~



admission to the program. Qualifying students will typically be working to make up deficiencies in their background to begin graduate work in their area of interest. An offer of qualifying admission must be accompanied by a set of expected requirements to be completed within one year. The requirements normally will consist of between 12 and 30 units of specified undergraduate courses and will include the required grade for each course. Applicants who require fewer than 12 units of undergraduate work to demonstrate their academic preparedness, or to provide the necessary background for the particular area of study should be considered for regular admission. A minimum of 12 units is established to ensure that an adequate amount of work is required. The maximum of 30 units ensures that the required work can be completed within one year.

If these requirements are met within the stipulated time frame then the qualifying student will be admitted to the degree program for which the qualifying offer of admission was given. If the student fails to complete the specified courses or to achieve the required grades, either additional courses will be required or admission to the graduate program will be denied.

The minimum university requirements for admission as a qualifying student are as follows.

- a) a bachelor's degree, or the equivalent
- b) submitted evidence of academic ability, usually in the form of references from qualified referees

### **1.3.9 Admission with a Conditional Requirement 1.3.8 Conditions of Admission**

Conditional admission may be offered to an **An** applicant who does not meet the minimum academic admission requirements but who is deemed to be substantially ready to undertake a graduate program **may be admitted with additional program admissions conditions**. For example, an applicant who has completed the degree required for admission to the graduate program, but whose academic average is slightly below the minimum required for admission to that program, may be ~~considered for conditional admission~~. **An offer of conditional admission will specify the graduate required to complete additional courses and achieve a specified grade point average as part of their graduate program.** ~~that the applicant must complete and the grades that are expected in order to be granted regular admission.~~ These courses should be completed no later than the end of the second term of enrollment. Graduate courses taken while admitted conditionally may be applied to the student's graduate program requirements.

### **1.3.10–1.3.9 Admission as a Non-degree student**

Normally, a non-degree student at the graduate level has at least a bachelor's degree, or the equivalent, is admitted in order to complete specified courses, but is not seeking a degree

from this university. A non-degree **graduate** student will not be permitted to enroll in undergraduate courses.

Application is through the graduate program committee in the ~~department~~ **academic unit** in which the student wishes to work; applicants are advised to contact the ~~department~~ **unit** before submitting an application (see 1.3.1). Transcripts of previous university work (or proof of obtaining a degree) will be required at the time of application, but letters of reference will not necessarily be required.

Non-degree students who are subsequently admitted to a graduate certificate, diploma, or degree program at Simon Fraser University may request to apply up to 6 units of credit toward that subsequent credential, under the following conditions:

- a) The courses must have been completed within three years (9 terms) of starting the graduate credential.
- b) Normally the request is made in writing to the admitting unit's graduate program committee before the student begins the graduate credential.
- c) The graduate program committee judges that content of the prior courses are of continued relevance for the proposed credential and approves their application to the new credential.
- d) The courses must not have been applied toward the requirements for a previously completed credential unless this is permitted in the Senate approved program requirements.

### ~~1.3.11~~ **1.3.10** Admission as an Exchange Student

Bona fide graduate students at other universities who wish to complete courses at Simon Fraser University, not leading to a degree at this university, will be admitted to complete specific graduate courses on the recommendation of the chair of the ~~department~~ **academic unit** (or equivalent officer) and the dean of graduate studies at the other university, and with the permission of the appropriate graduate program committee and the dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies at Simon Fraser University.

### ~~1.3.12~~ **1.3.11** Admission as a Visiting Researcher

Simon Fraser University accepts visiting research students under the terms of the Canadian Graduate Student Research Mobility Agreement. For details, see [Visiting Research Students](#) on the Faculty of Graduate Studies website.

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### ~~1.3.14~~ **1.3.12** Application to Complete a Second Master's or Doctoral Degree

Students who have a master's or a doctoral degree (either from Simon Fraser University or another university) can apply to complete a second master's or doctoral degree under the following constraints:

1. no course work completed for the first degree shall count towards the second.
2. none of the research done for the first degree shall be used for the second.
3. none of the enrollment terms for the first degree shall count towards the enrollment terms for the second degree.

### ~~1.3.14~~ **1.3.13** Application to Complete a Non-joint Concurrent Graduate Degree

Students who are currently enrolled in a master's or doctoral degree at Simon Fraser University ~~can~~ **may** apply to complete a second master's or doctoral degree concurrently under the following constraints:

- a) no course work completed as part of the first degree shall count towards the second degree;
- b) none of the research done in the first degree shall be used in the second degree;
- c) none of the enrollment terms for the first degree shall count towards enrollment terms in the second degree;
- d) to apply to and enroll in a second graduate non-joint degree program concurrently, approval of the original program of enrollment must be obtained and the program being applied to must be informed prior to admission that the student is already enrolled in another degree program at SFU;
- e) the GGR's related to maximum duration for degree completion continue to apply and no extensions will be given due to being enrolled in more than one program;
- f) annual progress reviews must be completed for each program;
- g) all university regulations apply independently for each program including the application of tuition fees (i.e. fees will be charged for tuition for each program but ancillary fees will only be charged for each term of enrollment);
- h) a student may ~~choose to~~ apply for a personal leave from one of the programs while completing requirements for the other program **as long as the student is within the time limit for personal leave** (see **1.4.5**). (Please note that personal leave terms still count towards the maximum time limit for degree completion);

i) student financial support may be provided by either ~~department~~ **academic unit** following consultation between the two units.